

Raise Your Consciousness

Spiritual gurus point to a way of being in eternal bliss — dhyana. Constant dhyana, helps us enhance our powers of perception, and induces a state of eternal tranquillity

CHOOSE YOUR STYLE

SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

How important is meditation in conflict resolution?

■ Definitely, your perception, observation, listening capacity and understanding of the other person's point of view — these are all enhanced through meditation. This is because meditation helps you raise your consciousness.

But there are so many different types of meditation — how would I know which one is right for me?

■ You go to a departmental store or supermarket and you are able to choose and shop among the various options available, is it not?

Meditation is the journey from sound to silence, from movement to stillness, from a limited identity to unlimited space.

If you have meditated, you should feel light like a flower. ■

YOU ARE THE CENTRE OF YOUR UNIVERSE

SHANTANU NAGARKATTI

No problem can be solved at the level of consciousness in which you created it.

— Albert Einstein

Consciousness is awareness of a universe where you are the centre. When you are awake, you are the centre of your universe. In dream sleep, the self remains the centre of the dream universe. Yet, in deep sleep, neither the universe nor the self, exists.

The fourth state of consciousness is *turiya* or the state of enlightenment. Here, the universe exists, but not the self. The self or ego acts as a prism and distorts perception through self-interest, self-centredness and selfishness. Similarly it also skews decisions and actions.

The ego is the source of all problems. Rising to the *turiya* state, problems spontaneously cease and natural solutions become obvious. Actions to remedy any problems created in the earlier state of consciousness also become spontaneous and effortless.

There are no material solutions to material problems — only spiritual solutions. The solutions of today created in material consciousness become the problems of tomorrow. Only by rising and dwelling in spirituality do all problems cease. ■

ART OF AVOIDANCE

MAULANA WAHIDDUDIN KHAN

Tranquillity means living in peace by avoiding disturbances one faces in social life. This state of mind can be achieved by adopting the principle of avoidance. When you avoid problems, you achieve a state beyond the problems you are facing. Meditation helps in achieving this psychological state. In other words, meditation can be called the art of avoidance. Although problems will still be there, through meditation you will be able to go beyond these problems and thus free yourself of stress, at least temporarily, if not in the permanent sense. Problems are part of social living; you cannot eliminate these problems. These problems disturb the tranquil state of our mind. So, in such a situation, what is the way of achieving tranquillity? Generally, problems do not physically hit you, they affect you only psychologically. It is thus easy to control the psychological process and attain tranquillity. One method to attain this state is by adopting this formula: 'If the problem is not afflicting me physical harm, then why should I bother?'

The other way is to train your thinking faculty to harness your feelings in such a way that you become unaffected by problems. Although you will be physically in the helm of affairs, mentally you will remain unaffected. Both methods are initially the same. In the first method, the principle of avoidance is adopted intellectually, while in the second method, the same principle is adopted spiritually by training your feelings and conceptually going beyond the world of problems.

When you achieve this state of tranquillity, it would lead to good health and also biological wellbeing. ■

MEDITATION ISN'T DHYANA!

YOGI ASHWINI

There are three states of mind, which modern sciences acknowledge — the conscious, unconscious and subconscious states. The fourth state, which science does not acknowledge is the super conscious state or *turiya* state. There is confusion between meditation, hypnosis and *dhyana*. They are thought to be the same, but vedic *rishis* had experiences of subtler dimensions. Mantras enabled them to see images of *devas* and *devis*. With their help, they could manifest in the (unreal) physical world objects like various weaponry, heal the diseased, bestow physical attributes, wealth... and

the like. This was the state of *dhyana* which they were in, the *turiya* state, and so they could do all this. In *dhyana*, there is no *pratyaya* or object of focus.

There is *prana*, or *shunya*. The five senses are at rest. You don't focus on anything. You are everywhere, yet you are nowhere. You let go. Depending on your karmas, divinity takes over you and the guru guides you to higher realms and into reality.

Siddhis are a by-product. In meditation, the conscious mind is at play. There is *pratyaya* or an object of focus. You are meditating on something which has a form and through it,

you are trying to reach the formless. This does not happen, because when you focus on a form, the mind and senses are active; neurons in the brain form the imagery and the senses do not get stilled. You are meditating on something — something physical or on unreality. You daydream, the subconscious is activated and you have visions and, whatever you have seen in your life is all recorded and is mixed and matched in imagery and over time you see things. There are no *siddhis* in this, just relaxation and a false impression of enlightenment. The so-called instant *kundalini* awakening falls in this category. Hypnosis taps into your subconscious mind. ■



IMAGING: REKHA SHARMA